

# AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING

**July 14, 2009**

**First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall**

## MINUTES

**Members Present:** Ruth Hazzard, Wm Levine, Pauline Lannon, Pat Wagner, Jaime Tidlund, Touria Eaton, Sally Fitz, David Ziomek (staff liaison) and Diana Stein (Select Board Liaison)

**Non Members Present:** Richard Roznoy, John Ferris, Dan Pratt, Jeremy Barker-Plotkin, Chris Brestrup, Norton Starr, Jim Wald, Guilford Mooring, John Gerber

The meeting began with John Ferris and David Ziomek giving a brief overview of the Kestrel land trust and what it has done and is doing. John Ferris then spoke about the Preserved Farmland signs the land trust is working on, and how they have already begun putting up signs in Hadley. Farms would voluntarily have signs put up; in Amherst the DPW would be assisting in putting the signs up with no expense to the farm.

John asked that the Agcom “sponsor” the letters going around to farmers in town showing their support. The Agcom voted unanimously to support and co-sign the letter to farmers regarding the signs.

It was decided the meeting minutes from June would be approved at the August meeting.

Guilford Mooring began a discussion on the Spring Street parking lot project that will take place with some of the Spring St. work to begin this fall. He noted the sidewalks are now 5’ wide and will be made 14’ wide to have more of a nice open walking area for pedestrians leading to what may potentially become a larger business district in the center. Only one space will be lost in the reconstruction of the parking lot, although the remaining spaces will be narrower.

The town is trying to revamp the common and spruce it up. The town feels there will be no major impact on the farmers market that currently takes place in this parking lot 26 Saturdays a year. Farmers will be allowed to pull their vehicles onto the enlarged sidewalks and will not lose any market space. There is some concern amongst farmers about the placement of light poles, benches and planters as some of these items could potentially be in the way of someone trying to pull their vehicle onto the sidewalk.

It was Guilford’s feeling that there would be no major impact on the market at all even during construction, any construction work being performed during the market season would be wrapped up before the market would even take place. One vendor made the comment that he would actually feel safer selling at the market because now there will be a buffer between the vendors and busy S. Pleasant Street.

John Gerber gave a presentation about the “fire pit” chat being held at Simple Gifts farm 8/19/2009; he was looking to the Ag-Com to be a co-sponsor of the event for publicity. The Ag com voted unanimously to support and sponsor this event, which would involve a discussion on the “good old days” and recognize farms in the North Amherst community and let people know some about their history.

An update was given about the farm festival and the most recent festival meeting Sally has said that with some help she can design a flyer that would get distributed on and before the festival, there was also talk about trying to get something into school news letters. Harpo is working on the music, games and hay maze he is also trying to get a poster designed for publicity. The BBQ menu was discussed with a chicken meal being served at dinnertime, donations from farmers will also help provide some of the extras during the meal.

Approved at the September 8, 2009 Agricultural Commission meeting.

**Conservation Commission Meeting**  
**July 14, 2009**  
**Page 2 of 2**

Ruth brought up the issue regarding communication between the Agcom and other boards; she is feeling like there is less communication sense our letter went out to other town boards. The commission decided that each member should pick a committee or board to “follow” by reviewing their agendas and minutes to try to stay up on any Ag related topics that may come about, and than attend a meeting if there is an Ag issue.

Pat – Conservation Commission  
Wm – Planning Board  
Jaime – Design and review board  
Sally – Board of Health

The meeting was adjourned with the next meeting set for August 11<sup>th</sup>.